

**DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES**

**2002 ASIAN AND PACIFIC  
ISLANDER INITIATIVE  
ACTION PLAN ANNUAL REPORT  
OCTOBER 1, 2001 TO  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2002 (FY 2002)**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Department of Employment Services' (DOES) paramount goal over the last fiscal year was the translation of public information documents, videos, and the telephone interactive menu into Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. Translation of the various brochures, pamphlets, and flyers into Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese greatly improved our ability to provide information to the community regarding the services offered. Providing the public with documents that were translated also supported our goal and mission to enable all sectors of the community to achieve economic and social stability and to ensure equal access to the myriad of programs offered through the department.

To date, more than half of the inventoried documents were translated into Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean. Depending on the informational needs of the community, additional documents should be available by the end of calendar year 2002. The One-Stop video is also expected to be available in Vietnamese by November 2002. Scripts for the Telequent telephone interactive

menu system have been approved and taping of these messages should be available on the system by the second quarter of fiscal year 2003.

The department encountered several obstacles in hiring employees of Asian and Pacific Islander descent. Initially, a bilingual position, for the Office of Customer Relations was posted in October of 2001; however, the position was cancelled after no qualified candidates applied. The department in the future has agreed to forward all future positions to the Mayor's Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (API) to not only post on their website, but to distribute throughout the community. Based upon previous experiences with the API Office, our future efforts should be more successful.

The department identified several vendors to provide sensitivity training for frontline staff on serving persons from different cultures. The department's Office of Staff Development along with the API liaison interviewed both vendors in the second quarter of fiscal year 2002. While the modules presented by the vendors would have addressed this objective, the quotes presented were well beyond the department's fiscal capacity. Thus, this task will become one of the main goals for fiscal year 2003. The department's Office of Staff Development plans to explore various avenues that could include developing the module and providing the training in-house.

Although bilingual employees remain the first choice in providing services to the API community, training was provided on the Language Line. This training will again be offered in fiscal year 2003.

The Boat People SOS provided invaluable assistance in editing several publications. This relationship developed into a working dialog during a meeting on August 20, 2002 when representatives from the Boat People SOS and the Chinatown Service Center met with the Associate Director for the Office of Youth Programs to discuss program opportunities available through the department. The department's API liaison will continue to work with Community Based Organizations (CBO) and the API Office to make this relationship both fruitful and successful.

The Office of Customer Relations and Marketing Unit participated in several community events this fiscal year. Bilingual flyers and brochures were distributed to educate the public on available DOES services.

Core identified objectives for fiscal 2003 include completing the translation of documents, sensitivity training, and maintaining our relationships with the Boat People SOS and the Chinatown Service Center. The translations, which began in earnest in fiscal year 2001, will be an ongoing project since the department is continuing to develop informational brochures to promote public awareness of services. Sensitivity training will be a focus

and priority for the Office of Staff Development. Finally, the API liaison and the Office of Youth Programs will continue to meet with the CBO's to identify mechanisms and programs that will foster a working relationship.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Employment Services provides comprehensive services to the residents of the District that include implementation of the Workforce Investment Act, private and public workers' compensation programs, unemployment insurance, welfare to work, youth programs, an apprenticeship program, and wage and hour regulation. The majority of these functions are provided through the D.C. Networks One-Stop Centers that are strategically located throughout the service areas. These One-Stop Centers have trained employment counselors and modern technical equipment that help to enhance efforts made by customers in job seeking, training, or filing for unemployment compensation benefits. The overall goal of the agency is to provide our customers with the best possible service to reach and achieve their individual employment goal.

Serving the Asian Pacific Islander community has been incorporated into this goal with the opening of new Business Improvement District One-Stop Center located at 9th and G Streets, N.W.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS/OUTSTANDING TASKS**

### **OBJECTIVE 1 Translation of Documents**

The department began this objective in earnest starting with an inventory of the documents disseminated to the public. The

inventory was completed on September 25, 2001. The procurement action to select the vendors, who would perform the actual translation, was completed January 29, 2002. One of the first documents translated during the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2002 was the One-Stop Career Center location flyer. This document was primary in that the majority of the services that the Department offers are provided at the One-Stop Career Center locations. Documents, such as Passport to Work for the summer youth program, were also translated and made available in time for the kickoff for that program. Other core service documents included unemployment insurance and workers' compensation benefits brochures. These were also translated and made available to the community.

Action was also taken to translate the English messages on the department's Telequent system into Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese. While the script was selected and the procurement action completed by January 2002, this objective remains due to the fact that the script required updating. It is expected that this feature should be available on the Telequent system by the end of Fiscal Year 2003.

The department also recently completed a One-Stop Career Center video in Vietnamese. This video, as the English version, features all the available services at the One-Stop Centers.

## **Objective 2 Diversifying Workforce**

Currently, the department has three employees who speak various Asian Pacific Islander languages. While we began Fiscal Year 2002 with four, the recent merger of the Office of Occupational Safety and Health into the Mayor's Office of Risk Management, resulted in a loss of one position. However, measures are being implemented for Fiscal Year 2003 to recruit API individuals to better facilitate service delivery to this segment of the community.

Several bilingual positions were identified during Fiscal Year 2002. One of the identified positions would have been placed at the Business Industrial District One-Stop Career Center. The department experienced some obstacles in recruiting bilingual employees. For example, recruitments for bilingual individuals for the positions of Manpower Development Specialist and Customer Relations Assistant were cancelled because of a lack of qualified applicants.

In the future, the Department, through its liaison, will work with the staff at the Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OAPIA) to publicize future openings within the Department in the OAPIA monthly newsletter. Postings will also be sent to several identified community based organizations. Through these efforts the Department should be able to identify and attract qualified candidates to enhance overall service delivery to the community.

## **Objective 3 Multicultural Training**

Two vendors submitted proposals and were interviewed by the Department's Office of Staff Development and the API liaison. One vendor's overall vision included a comprehensive plan that would interview customers, staff and management to determine core needs of the department. This plan would have provided insight into the current environment in the Department and the perception in the community. With this information the department could have gauged the change after the implementation of the training. This vendor noted that while the price tag of some \$58,000.00 appeared to be high, the results would have been worth it.

The second vendor submitted a plan for somewhat less than \$20,000.00 to develop a module and to train frontline staff. This training, based upon the quoted price, did not include an assessment plan.

Both submissions were studied carefully, but resources were not available to procure and implement either plan.

The department realized that cultural sensitivity training involved more resources than were available during Fiscal Year 2002. In the future, the Office of Staff Development (OSD) will explore alternative resources as was done in the case of the sensitivity training for service delivery to persons with disabilities. This training was paid

for by an organization that receives grants for the federal government. OSD will also explore the possibility of developing the training module in-house. The API liaison, through contacts with other liaisons, will also look at vendors used by other District agencies. The latter approach should be economically more feasible as the cost of developing the module will be offset.

#### **OBJECTIVE 4 Community Partnerships**

The community-based organizations (CBO) that the department has established a relationship with include the Boat People SOS, and the Chinatown Service Center. The Boat People SOS assisted by proofreading several department documents.

On August 20, 2002, the department's Youth Program Director met with the Boat People SOS and the Chinatown Service Center to discuss program opportunities to employ youth in the API community businesses. Several options were explored that included subsidized salaries and transportation. Both CBO's were informed that a new Request for Proposal would be issued shortly that addresses the department's needs regarding this program. The department's API coordinator will follow up in Fiscal Year 2003 with both the CBO's and the Youth Program Director to ensure that this dialog remains at the forefront.

Options will also be explored to enlist the community partners in the recruiting efforts.

#### **OBJECTIVE 5 Community Outreach**

The department participated in several events where the Asian and Pacific Islander community was targeted. In May 2002, the department's Office of Public Affairs maintained a booth during the first job fair conducted by the OAPIA. Resumes were taken from perspective job applicants. This event was held in the basement of the Martin Luther King Library.

The department, on September 7, 2002, also participated in the Mid-Autumn Children's Moon Festival hosted by the Boat People SOS and the Washington D.C. Vietnamese Community Center. The event was held at the Sacred Heart: Gavan Center at 3211 Sacred Heart Way, N.W., Washington, D.C. The Office of Public Affairs again set up a booth and dispensed departmental flyers and brochures in the various API languages.

On September 30, 2002, the Director of the department, as an ex-officio member, attended an Asian Pacific Islander Commission meeting. Mr. Irish answered questions posed by the members regarding the programs offered by the department.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED**

Several obstacles were identified in Fiscal Year 2002. Initially, recruitment of API

employees will have to be a concerted effort that involves the Office of Personnel, OAPIA, and our community partners. It is expected that with these combined efforts, the department will be able to bring to its workforce those individuals that reflect the community.

Second, planning for cultural sensitivity training must begin immediately in order to fulfill our remaining obligation from Fiscal Year 2002. Our training director is aware that this training is an outstanding task that must be given priority. The department's API liaison spoke with several other department liaisons and will pass these leads onto our training director to explore.

#### **FUTURE PLAN:**

The cultural sensitivity training will not only be incorporated into other training planned for the frontline staff at the One-Stop Centers, but will also be introduced to all frontline staff in other department locations as a separate training. Both these trainings should begin in the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2003 and be completed by the end of the third quarter.

The liaison will continue to work with the Director and the human resource manager to identify future frontline position openings. A concerted effort through the Office of Personnel, OAPIA and our community partners should result in a successful recruitment of API employees.

The focus for the Fiscal Year 2003 initiative includes translating remaining department documents, implementing cultural sensitivity training, recruiting API employees for the frontline, developing a departmental policy that provides direction on interpretation services, developing a working dialog with the community partners, and participating in API events through the city.

#### **APPENDICES:**

Copies of translated Documents

List of Translation Contractors/  
Companies

Agency API Employee Information

List of Community Partners

Outreach Flyers\*

Status Reports

\*included in translated documents